

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend Claims 1, 33 and 38 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A safety shield apparatus comprising:  
  
a needle having a distal portion and a proximal portion; and  
  
a shield including at least one elongated part, the shield having a proximal end mounted with the proximal portion of the needle and a distal end mounted with a planar contact surface, the planar contact surface including a needle linear bearing that slidably engages the needle to facilitate ~~facilitates~~ movement of the needle relative to the shield, the shield being extensible between a retracted position and an extended position via fixed positioning of the planar contact surface relative to movement of the shield.
2. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a needle hub configured to support the proximal portion of the needle.
3. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the needle hub includes an appendage.
4. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the appendage has at least one opening to facilitate manipulation thereof.
5. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the appendage has at least one wing for manipulation thereof.
6. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the shield includes at least one segment.

7. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the distal portion of the needle is angularly displaced approximately 90 degrees from the proximal portion.

8. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the planar contact surface includes a pad for engagement with a subject.

9. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the segment defines a channel.

10. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the segment defines a channel and the shield has a slider configured for slidable movement with the channel.

11. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the shield includes a latch engageable with the needle.

12. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the latch includes a latch arm for maintaining the shield in the extended position.

13. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the latch includes a plurality of surfaces configured to maintain the shield in the extended position.

14. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the latch includes an arcuate surface engageable with the needle.

15. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus comprising:

a needle having a distal portion defining a longitudinal axis which is angularly displaced relative to a longitudinal axis defined by a proximal portion of the needle; and

a shield mounted with the needle and extensible, via a needle guide movably

guiding the needle, between a retracted position and an extended position.

16. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, further comprising a needle hub configured to support the proximal portion of the needle.

17. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the needle hub includes an appendage.

18. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the appendage has at least one opening to facilitate manipulation thereof.

19. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the appendage has at least one wing for manipulation thereof.

20. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the shield includes at least one segment.

21. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the distal portion of the needle is angularly displaced approximately 90 degrees from the proximal portion.

22. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, wherein a distal end of the shield is attached to a planar contact surface.

23. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 22, wherein the planar contact surface includes a pad for engagement with a subject.

24. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, wherein a distal end of the shield is hingedly attached to a planar contact surface.

25. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, wherein a distal end of the shield is releasably attached to a planar contact surface.

26. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the planar contact surface includes a pad for engagement with a subject.

27. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the segment defines a channel.

28. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the segment defines a channel and the shield has a slider configured for slidable movement with the channel.

29. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the shield includes a latch engageable with the needle.

30. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the latch includes a latch arm for maintaining the shield in the extended position.

31. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the latch includes a plurality of surfaces configured to maintain the shield in the extended position.

32. (Withdrawn) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the latch includes an arcuate surface engageable with the needle.

33. (Currently Amended) A safety shield apparatus comprising:

a needle having a distal portion defining a longitudinal axis which is angularly displaced relative to a longitudinal axis defined by a proximal portion of the needle; and

a shield including at least one elongated part, the shield having a proximal end mounted with the proximal portion of the needle and a distal end mounted with a planar contact surface, the planar contact surface including a needle linear bearing that slidably engages the needle to facilitate ~~facilitates~~ movement of the needle relative to the shield, the shield being extensible between a retracted position and an extended position via fixed positioning of the planar contact surface relative to movement of the shield.

34. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the planar contact surface includes a plurality of openings.

35. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the planar contact surface includes an anchor part.

36. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the distal end of the shield is hingedly attached to the planar contact surface.

37. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the planar contact surface includes a pad for engagement with a subject.

38. (Currently Amended) A safety shield apparatus comprising:

a needle having a distal portion defining a longitudinal axis which is angularly displaced relative to a longitudinal axis defined by a proximal portion of the needle; and

a shield means, mounted with the needle and extensible between a retracted position and an extended position, for preventing hazardous exposure to the distal portion of the needle, the shield means having a planar body contacting surface, the planar body contacting surface including a needle linear bearing that slidably engages the needle to facilitate ~~faeilitates~~ movement of the needle relative to the shield via fixed positioning of the planar contact surface relative to movement of the shield.

39. (Original) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 38, further comprising a latch means engageable with the needle for maintaining the shield means in the extended position.

40. (Previously Presented) A safety shield apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the planar contact surface includes texturing.